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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/813,899	03/31/2004	John Riley Hawkins	3518.1001-001	1803

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EXAMINER

IZQUIERDO, DAVID A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3738

DATE MAILED: 11/02/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/813,899

Applicant(s)

HAWKINS ET AL.

Examiner

David A. Izquierdo

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 June 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4, 6-10 and 12-53 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 14-53 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 and 6-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 12 and 13 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments, see pages 13-18, filed June 30th, 2006, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 1 under 35 U.S.C. 102 have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of Landry et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication Number 2003/0233145) which claims priority to Provisional Application 60/363219.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Landry et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication Number 2003/0233145).

4. Landry et al. discloses a method of implanting an artificial disc comprising:

- a. fixing a position of an insertion guide, which acts as a midline marker. Relative to a face of a vertebral body for instant alignment of artificial disc placement;
- b. Inserting a distraction instrument into the intervertebral space using the midline marker as a guide;
- c. Selecting an artificial disc for implantation; and

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- d. Inserting the artificial disc in the intervertebral spacing using the midline marker as a guide (P0021-0026).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1, 2, and 5-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Robie et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication Number 2002/0161366) in view of Landry et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication Number 2003/0233145).

7. Robie et al attaches the template (50) to a vertebral body as a midline marker, where the midline marker (50) is inserted in the guide of figure 4a and impacted until embedded with the vertebral body (P0058). An artificial disc (Hedrocel ALIF) is selected for implantation verified, where the size is verified by the insertion depth of the distractor (P0060), shown in Figure 10 and the implant is prepared for implantation (0061) by stuffing the implant with autologous bone. A window is removed from the annulus, where the window is the width of an artificial implant (P0052) and the nucleus pulposus is removed, as is inherent in the discectomy (P0053). For the purposes of claims 7, the distractors (10) will be trial spacers that are changed until an appropriate size is determined (P0056). The endplates are shaped by a reamer instrument (P0059), reamer instruments having blades, where the shaping instrument is guided by the midline marker (50) (P0059). The template is finally removed (P0063). As per claim 8, the trial spacers (10) are contacted by an insertion tool with a pin end (Figure 3B), where the template

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(50) (midline marker) is inserted with the pin insertion instrument of Figure 4A where the insertion instrument is removed as per the method figures 5-12.

8. However, Robbie et al. fails to disclose the use of a midline marker as a guide. Landry et al. disclose the use of an insertion guide, which acts as a midline marker, as disclosed above. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the use of a guide to direct a distraction member as taught by Landry et al. with a method of implanting an artificial disc, as per Robbie et al. The motivation to combine being that a guide will accurately place the distracter within the disc space, as found in Landry et al. (P0022).

9. Claims 3 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Robie et al. in view of Landry et al. in further view of Michelson (U.S. Patent Application Publication Number 2002/0058944) Robie et al in view of Landry et al. is discussed supra. However Robie et al in view of Landry et al. does not disclose radiographical markers. Michelson teaches radiographical (P0069) in the same field of endeavor or the analogous art of surgery for the purpose of radiographical imaging. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teaching of radiographical markers, as taught by Michelson, to aid in radiographical visualization as per Robbie, in order to assure the implant is aligned properly and to verify the implant (Michelson P0069).

Allowable Subject Matter

10. Claims 12 and 13 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

11. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

12. A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

13. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David A. Izquierdo whose telephone number is 571-272-1943. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 8:00 am until 4:30 pm.

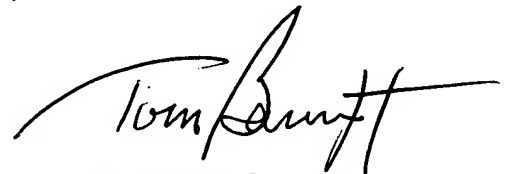
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14. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine McDermott can be reached on 571-272-4754. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

15. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

David A. Izquierdo

Patent Examiner



TOM BARRETT
PRIMARY EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700